



E-Update *from* Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier

A Message from Assemblymember DeSaulnier

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Upcoming Event

Woman's Health Forum

**Saturday
October 13th
9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**Mt. Diablo High School
2450 Grant Street
Concord**

**For additional
Information,
please call
(925) 372-7990**

The delay in passing the 2008 State budget was not the Legislature's finest moment. I, like you, was frustrated that we could not reach agreement. I understand that my constituents expect a budget within a timely manner, but impediments, both political and institutional, make that difficult.

On July 20, I voted for the budget passed by the Assembly -- a budget that was essentially the same budget that was approved by the Senate.

This year's budget fully funds K-12 and higher education -- funding career technical programs and preparation programs that help more kids succeed in college and thus contribute to our growing economy.

It also tackles the pressing issues of gangs and juvenile justice. By aiding state and local law enforcement, we can keep at-risk youth out of gangs and help keep gangs out of our neighborhoods.

Along with these positive initiatives, we have also been able to improve the state's fiscal solvency. The budget contains no new taxes, pays down debt and has the largest reserve in history.

After reviewing other

states, I have realized that California is behind the curve. We are one of three states, along with Arkansas and Rhode Island, that requires a two-thirds vote to pass a budget. Many other states develop multi-year budgets and require only a simple majority of legislators to pass each budget.

With Senator Torlakson as author and Assemblymember Hancock and I as principal co-authors, we are spearheading a constitutional amendment that would allow the Legislature to pass the budget with a simple majority vote. Our proposal still maintains the requirement for a super-majority if a budget should include tax increases.

Our state's current system leads to finger-pointing and excuses for concessions made to one party or the other. This proposal will allow for less budget gridlock and more accountability for the success or failure of each year's budget.

The proposal also calls for long-term planning. Many states have multi-year budget plans which allows them to consider the long-term goals. Budget changes that are impossible to carry out in the short-run can be



part of a multi-year plan.

It is time for California to move forward with its budget process. Senator Pro Tem Don Perata has proposed a Budget Review Panel -- to include the Governor's top finance expert, the nonpartisan legislative policy analyst, and legislative leaders -- to review solutions to the budget crisis. As a long-time supporter of governmental reform on the local and state level, I stand firmly behind Senator Perata and believe that the only resolution to California's budget crisis is well-thought out reform.

We have been given a clear directive - political posturing cannot lead to denied services to the most vulnerable in our communities.

I know that the Legislature can improve California's budget process and better serve its people.

DeSaulnier Receives Brady Campaign Award

A long-time advocate of gun regulation and firearm education, Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier was recently presented with the California Brady Campaign Excellence in Leadership Award for his commitment to gun control and as a co-author of Assembly Bill 1471.

The Brady Campaign's California Chapter traveled to Sacramento to express their outrage about the recent Virginia Tech shootings and frustration about rising

gun violence in California's communities.

The Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence honored legislators who carried bills to give law enforcement the tools and resources they need to fight violent crimes.

"I am proud to continue this good work with the California Brady Campaign," said DeSaulnier. "Leaders in my district are working hard to stem the tide of youth violence and gun crime in our communities. This honor from

the Brady Campaign is an indication that we are moving in a positive direction."

AB 1471 would require that new models of semiautomatic handguns be equipped with micro-stamping technology. This consists of engraving microscopic characters onto the firing pin and chamber, which would be transferred onto the cartridge casing when the handgun is fired. The stamped casings could help identify the gun and its purchaser.



Assemblymember DeSaulnier receiving award from the Brady Campaign

Dedication of the New George Miller Benicia-Martinez Bridge

On August 23rd, Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier's Assembly Concurrent Resolution 62 was chaptered, officially naming the northbound span of the Benicia-Martinez Bridge after Congressman George Miller. The bridge links the Contra Costa County and Solano County portions of Congressman Miller's district.

At the official bridge dedication on August 25th, Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier and Senator Tom Torlakson presented Congressman Miller with a framed copy of ACR 62.

"This only begins to convey our gratitude for Congressman Miller's years of service," DeSaulnier said. "George has worked tirelessly for the people of Contra Costa, and this nation, for over three

decades without seeking the spotlight."

First elected to the United States Congress in 1974, Congressman Miller's achievements include authoring key laws on environmental protection, energy policy, child care, mental health, aid to victims of domestic violence and numerous education reforms. Congressman Miller was one of the four original co-authors of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which passed with strong bipartisan support and was signed into law in 2002. This act fulfilled many of Congressman Miller's longstanding efforts of improving education for all children. He is currently Chair of the House Education and Labor Committee.

In addition to his important work on legislation, Congressman Miller has also

been an unwavering advocate for the transportation needs of Contra Costa County, including extending the BART

"This only begins to convey our gratitude for Congressman Miller's years of service."

Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier

rail system, upgrading the Vallejo Baylink ferry service, widening State Highway Route 4 and achieving greater access to bus and rail in

Martinez and Richmond.

"Many improvements in public transportation and infrastructure in my district could not have happened without the

Committee Appointments

Standing Assembly Committees:

- Appropriations
- Human Services
- Labor and Employment
- Rules
- Transportation

Select Committees:

- Air Quality, Chair—NEW!!!!
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse—NEW!!!!
- Domestic Violence—NEW!!!!
- Growth Management, Chair
- Youth Violence Prevention

Joint Committee:

- Rules



Congressman George Miller and Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier standing next to the "Congressman George Miller Bridge" plaque to be installed at the toll plaza.

hard work and dedication of George Miller," DeSaulnier said. "It was Congressman Miller who led the federal-state partnership that met the immense environmental and technical challenges associated with the Benicia-Martinez Bridge."

Legislative Update

As a freshman legislator, Assemblymember DeSaulnier experienced great success with his legislative agenda. Currently, three of his bills have been signed into law by the Governor and seven more await his signature.

As noted elsewhere in the newsletter, ACR 62 was chaptered, which recognized the contributions of Congressman George Miller by naming the new span of the Benicia-Martinez Bridge after

him.

AB 1023 which requires plastic bags to be compostable and biodegradable received no votes in opposition on the Senate floor and was approved and chaptered by the Governor on July 27th.

AB 1323, allows health care providers to administer new tuberculosis screening tests as long as the tests have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration and the Center for Disease Con-

trol.

Continuing his efforts to improvement our environment, Assemblymember DeSaulnier introduced AB 470, which repealed the sunset date for the operation of electronic personal assistive mobility devices (the most common which is known as a Segway). The use of this device for short trips instead of an auto can cut down on air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Assemblymember DeSaulnier's bills which are still awaiting the Governor's signature focus on smoke-free workplaces, growth management, aquatic species protection, foster care, banning internet cigarette sales and child care payment programs.

The bill based on Assemblymember DeSaulnier's "There Oughta Be a Law" contest, AB 1531, is also awaiting the signature of the Governor. This bill was submitted by Alisa Rosillo of Concord, who is the mother of two disabled children and experienced significant difficulties finding handicapped parking spaces. This bill requires more specific marking and signage for handicapped parking spaces and increases fines for those who repeatedly use disabled parking spaces unlawfully.

For more information on Assemblymember DeSaulnier's legislative program, please visit his website at:

<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a11>

Red Ribbon Week — October 23-31

As Red Ribbon Week is quickly approaching, it is important to know the history of this annual celebration. For many children, Red Ribbon Week may introduce the motto "Just Say No" to drugs, but few know the touching story behind this week.

This eventful week is deeply rooted within Californian and Mexican history. In 1947, Enrique Camarena was born in Mexicali, Mexico. After high school he joined the US Marine Corps, served on the Calexico Police Department and eventually worked with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

For many years, Agent Camarena trailed Mexico's biggest marijuana and cocaine traffickers, and was close to unlocking a multi-billion dollar drug



pipeline. On February 7, 1985 he was kidnapped and later found dead at the age of 37. Shortly after his death many friends and family began wearing red ribbons, pledging to be drug-free. The red ribbon is a symbol of the sacrifices made by Enrique Camarena and others on behalf of all Americans. Red Ribbon Week began to gain momentum throughout California and was nationally recognized by President and Mrs. Reagan in 1988.

This year, Red Ribbon Week will be celebrated from October 23rd through October 31st. In recognition of this week, Assemblymember

DeSaulnier's staff will be distributing red ribbon materials, including book-marks and certificates reflecting a commitment to remain drug free, to elementary schools throughout the 11th Assembly District.

"Save Me a Spot in College" Scholarship Contest

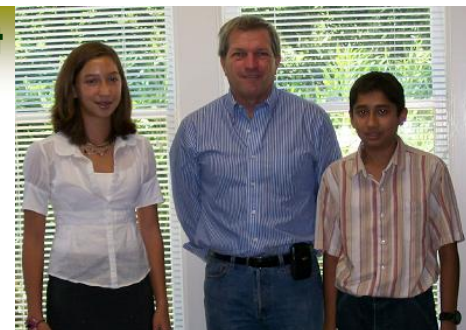
Two Contra Costa County students who participated in the "Save Me a Spot in College" contest recently visited Assemblymember DeSaulnier in his Martinez district office. Varinder Saini, of Pittsburg, and Lone Chan, of Martinez both read their essays to the Assemblymember.

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a nonprofit organization devoted to helping secure opportunities for the next generation to attend college. The 'Save Me a Spot in College' is a contest sponsored by the organization. This contest, open to California students in the 6th through 12th grade, has just com-

pleted its second year. The contest is an effort to hear young Californians speak about the need for college access for the growing number of young people in the state, and how a college education can improve their lives and provide a better future for California.

Entrants were asked to submit a written essay, create a poster or a radio or television advertisement on the contest's topic, "Why should California leaders save a spot for me and my peers in college?" Submissions were due in March and winners were announced in May.

Scholarships were awarded to both middle school and high school students



Assemblymember DeSaulnier with scholarship participants Lone Chan (left) and Varinder Saini (right).

according to age and category. Grand Prize Winners were awarded a \$2,500 scholarship. Additional scholarships ranging from \$500 - \$1000 were also awarded.



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2007 Children's Health and Fitness Fair



On August 4th Assemblymember Mark DeSaulnier, along with Senator Tom Torlakson and the City of Pittsburg, sponsored a Back To School Health and Fitness Fair for children. The event was held at Small World Park in Pittsburg and featured health information, book readings, free rides, martial art demonstrations and dance demonstrations. Over 700 residents of Contra Costa County attended this wonderful event.

Many thanks to all of our sponsors, volunteers, interns, and staff. Your hard work is what made this event possible.